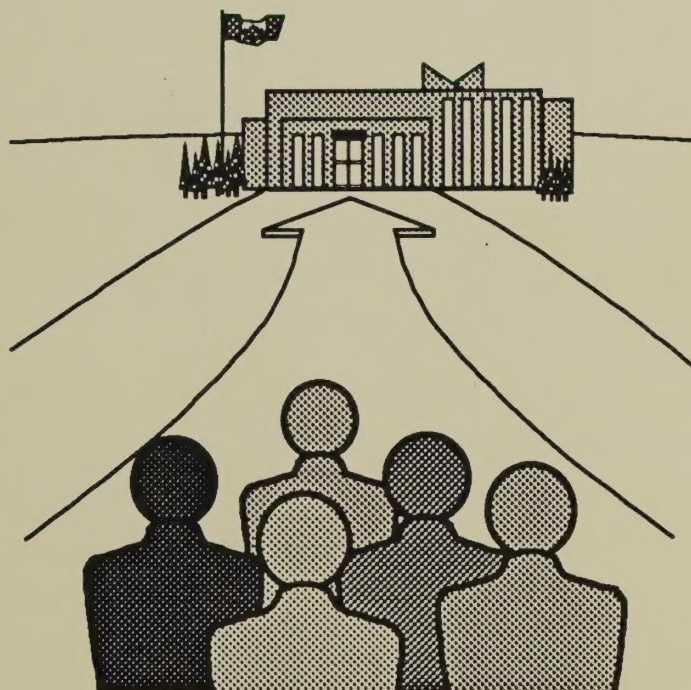


Towards Race Relations and Ethnocultural Equity

Update:

March, 1990



**THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
FOR THE CITY OF HAMILTON**

A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

To: All Colleagues, Students and Members of the Hamilton Community

Re: Towards Race Relations and Ethnocultural Equity

Our school system, as a major centre for socialization, has many responsibilities. Among them is the goal of working towards race relations and ethnocultural equity for everyone. I encourage you to participate fully during the coming months and years as planning, inservice opportunities and the full implementation of a Race Relations and Ethnocultural Equity Policy takes place.

Since 1986, the Board of Education for the City of Hamilton has undertaken a commitment in this regard.

Trustees, Senior Administrators and Support Staff, with assistance from experts in the community, drafted a working paper on Race Relations and Ethnocultural Equity. In April, 1989 a package was distributed to the following groups so that they might discuss, give input to and become part of the development of the Board's policy:

- parents
- secretaries
- trustees
- libraries
- race relations committees
- religious denominations and organizations
- teachers
- custodians
- business
- cultural groups
- administrators
- support staff
- industry
- ethnic associations

A media plan was implemented to invite community input and workshops were held to elicit input from staff, students and the community. Initially over 8000 copies of the working paper were distributed.

By June, 1989 over 2000 responses to the working paper were received from staff, students and community with considerable dialogue taking place both within Board and community facilities. A review team consisting of a cross section of staff analyzed the responses, and submitted a report to the Race Relations Planning Committee. This committee considered the review team's recommendations and made revisions to the working paper.

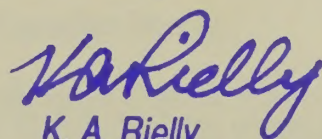
On December 7, 1989 the Board's Development Committee approved the Working Paper as a policy in principle and on January 4, 1990 it approved the general and specific recommendations in the Review. With the Review phase of policy development complete, the development phase is set to begin.

This phase will take a considerable amount of time, to allow staff, students and the community to be involved in the process and gain ownership in race relations and ethnocultural equity. Further development of the Working Paper will take place with area, department and school plans formulated and pilot tested.

Once the development phase is complete, the Working Paper will be brought back to the Board's Development Committee for approval as a Board policy. With this approval, full system implementation will begin.

Every employee has a role to play. I encourage you to participate as planning and/or inservice opportunities are presented.

Sincerely



*K. A. Rielly
Director of Education
and Secretary*

THE PROCESS FOR POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Review

Development

Implementation

RACE RELATIONS

This term implies harmonious relations, among persons of different races. Two key components are crucial for positive "race relations" - elimination of racial intolerance arising from prejudicial attitudes, and removal of racial disadvantage arising from systemic discrimination.

ETHNOCULTURAL EQUITY

Every Canadian belongs to some ethnic group and shares a cultural heritage particular to people of a certain national, religious, and/or language background. There is a wide variety of ethnocultural groups amongst people of African, Asian, European and indigenous North, Central and South American backgrounds in Canada. Some Canadians may experience discrimination because of ethnocultural background (ethnicity, religion, nationality, language, etc.), others because of race, and others because of both race and ethnocultural background. Ethnocultural equity means fair and just treatment for all people living in Canada regardless of their race, ethnicity, culture and religion.

dignity and worth of every individual

free from all discrimination

equal rights

responsibility for change belongs to everyone

eradication of racism in all its various forms

dignity and respect

warm and welcoming atmosphere

equal opportunity for employment

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE

In the spirit of the Canadian ideal and in support of our provincial and municipal race relations policies, the Board of Education for the City of Hamilton recognizes its responsibilities as an employer and a major centre of socialization within the Hamilton community. The ways in which schools define and present themselves, share in the life of the community and incorporate diversity profoundly affect the social attitudes, interaction, and learning of all students. The Board of Education for the City of Hamilton is dedicated to education that promotes positive race relations and ethnocultural equity.

We are committed to

- an environment which reflects, respects, and celebrates the racial, ethnic, cultural and religious plurality of our society.
- policies, programs and school environments which encourage all students, employees, parents, trustees and members of our community to fully contribute to and benefit from our rich racial, ethnic, cultural and religious society;
- school programs that promote Canadian identity emphasizing tolerance and respect for all, where diversity within Canadian life is seen as strength and portrayed as such in order that staff and students may become an integral part of Canadian culture and share in the Canadian identity;
- the belief that doctrines and practices which discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, culture and religion are morally reprehensible, socially destructive and contrary to the policies of this Board;
- pursuing an active role in the elimination of all racial, ethnic, cultural and religious discrimination in any form by trustees, employees or students, as well as eliminating those policies and practices which, while not intentionally discriminatory, have a discriminatory effect;
- a code of human conduct and treatment promoting positive race relations and ethnocultural equity that encompasses all racial, ethnic, cultural and religious groups and applies to all trustees, employees, students, parents, community groups and interested individuals who are associated with the Board of Education for the City of Hamilton
- providing appropriate human, material and financial resources for the development and implementation of our Race Relations and Ethnocultural Equity Policy.

LEADERSHIP INITIATIVES

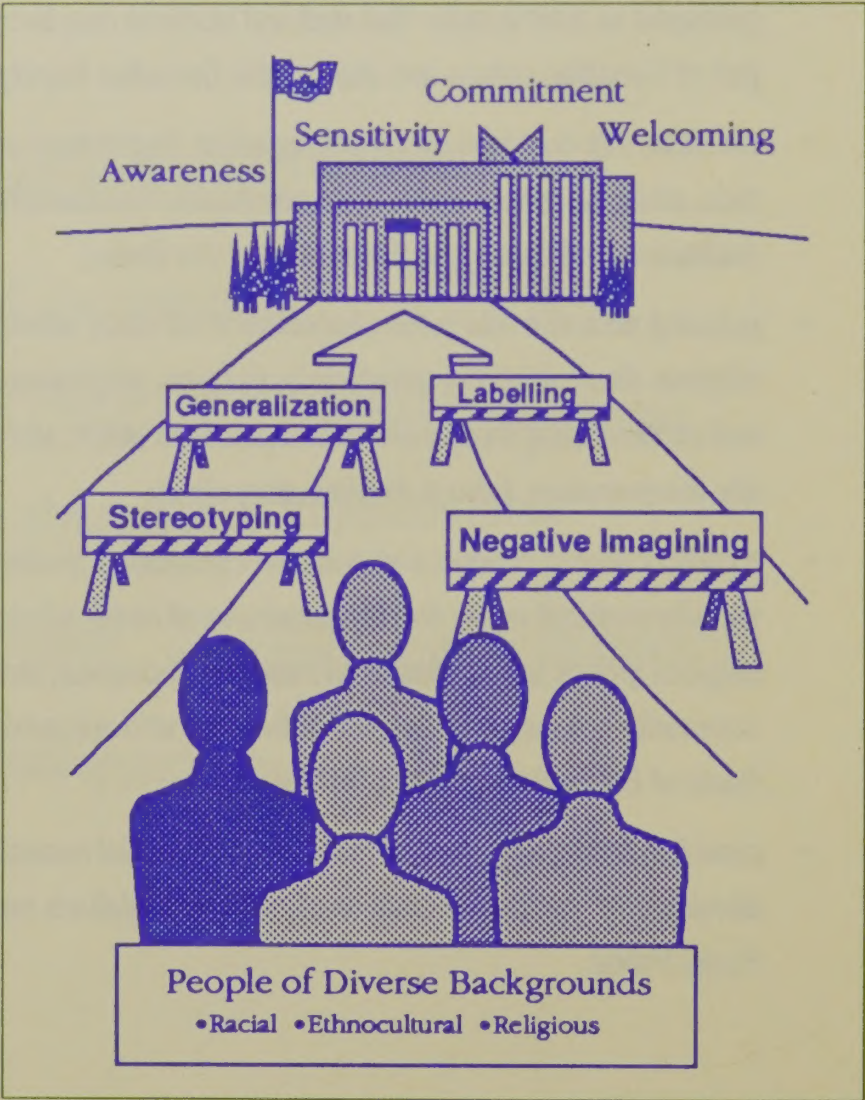
All staff in positions of leadership within the system will foster actively an environment of respect for the racial, ethnic, cultural and religious plurality of both our national and local society. Through the development and implementation of anti-racist programs and practices in all our classrooms and buildings, staff will actively participate in the eradication of racism in all its various forms.

- The Board's leadership will be representative of the racial, ethnic, cultural and religious groups living within the Board's jurisdiction. Where such representation is lacking, the Board will take steps to achieve it.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Effective school-community relations involve the participation of diverse community groups within the life of the school. Ultimately the participation of the community with school staffs on issues of mutual interest provides benefits beyond the initial concerns of race relations and ethnocultural equity.

The challenges of promoting ideal school-community relations involve all Board and school personnel and a community willing to take advantage of open channels of communication. The school system recognizes the need to deal sensitively with the racial, ethnic, cultural and religious needs of its community. To accomplish this, a warm welcome is extended to all members of the community to participate in the full life of the school. Individual differences will be treated with dignity and respect by all staff and students.



CURRICULUM

The goal of education is to provide all students with the opportunity to acquire the basic skills fundamental for future education, employment and living in a Canadian society that is multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, multi-religious and multi-lingual. The Board of Education for the City of Hamilton is committed to the review, development and implementation of curricula and co-curricular programs that give an accurate portrayal of the racial, ethnic, cultural and religious diversity of the City of Hamilton, the province of Ontario, Canada and the world.

- The Board of Education for the City of Hamilton defines curriculum as all student experiences for which the school system is responsible. The unconscious transmission of social and economic norms and expectations is often referred to as the hidden curriculum (ex. opening exercises, student behaviour codes, hallway displays....). These things are so much a part of schooling that they are seldom questioned or examined, yet impact on the values development of the student. Therefore, school staff need to become aware of and assess the hidden curriculum to ensure that racial, ethnic, cultural and religious discrimination is eliminated and that no student be denied opportunities to develop a sense of belonging and equal opportunity within the life of the school community.
- Curricula and co-curricular programs will provide opportunities for students and staff to develop an appreciation of other racial, ethnic, cultural and religious groups while fostering pride and understanding of their own heritage. Through the acquisition of these positive attitudes, students and staff will be better able to develop empathy for others and to acquire a sense of human rights, social justice and the necessary knowledge and skills to enable them to deal constructively with racism and discrimination.
- Learning materials will reflect the roles, experiences and contributions made by both men and women in our pluralistic society.
- Continuing Education programs will be developed to assist the whole family in understanding and adapting to the Canadian way of life.

pride in one's own heritage

developing empathy for others

human rights and social justice

SPECIAL SERVICES

We recognize individual needs of all students regardless of their background, and encourage parent/guardian input into educational decision-making. When receiving, assessing, placing and monitoring students the anxiety caused by social, geographic, linguistic, and cultural discontinuity are important considerations.

- All staff in a school share responsibility for creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere for all students new to a school. All staff, therefore, will be sensitive to and respect the special needs of all these new students including immigrant students, students from visible minority groups and aboriginal peoples.
- Assessment will be objective and take into account linguistic, racial, ethnic, cultural, religious and other individual differences in order to provide appropriate programming to meet individual needs of all students, including immigrant students, students from visible minority groups and aboriginal peoples.
- All new students will be placed age-appropriately in the neighbourhood school without a formal assessment (unless there are exceptional circumstances that would not support such a placement).
- All members of the school community will share responsibility with teaching staff for helping all students become aware of their own identity and heritage and to understand and respect the heritage of others. Counselling will play a critical role in ensuring that students and parents benefit from accurate and up-to-date information, direction and support.

the special needs of students

culture fair

respect the heritage of others

dismantle discriminatory barriers

*free from racial, ethnic, cultural and religious
stereotyping and discrimination*

RESPONDING TO RACIAL, ETHNOCULTURAL, RELIGIOUS HARASSMENT

The Board of Education for the City of Hamilton is committed to the principles of educational excellence and equality of opportunity. These goals can be attained best in a positive environment which protects and promotes the dignity, worth and self-esteem of every person and supports mutual respect and co-operation among individuals. Racial, ethnic, cultural or religious harassment in any form by our trustees, employees or students will not be tolerated.

- In adherence with the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Board's Policy Against Harassment states that every employee, volunteer and student in the workplace and school system has a right to freedom from harassment because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, record of offence, marital status, family status, employment status or disability.

*dignity, worth and self-esteem
of every person*

cooperation *mutual respect*

intervention must be immediate

For the purpose of this policy, harassment means engaging in a course of derogatory or vexatious comment or conduct that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome.

- Consistent with Ministry and Board policies each school, will have procedures in its discipline code for dealing with racial, ethnic, cultural and religious conflict. The school community will be made aware of this discipline code and where necessary, in languages they understand.
- Since non-intervention may be perceived as condoning the action response to any conflict or incident must be immediate.

For the purposes of this policy, incidents requiring an immediate response will include name-calling, jokes and slurs, graffiti, insults, threats, discourteous treatment, intimidation and written or physical abuse.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

An educational environment which is free from racial, ethnic, cultural and religious discrimination is necessary for each person to assume his/her role in the larger Canadian community and in an increasingly interdependent world. Our pluralistic society requires staff to address diverse learning, behavioural and communication styles. Maximizing the academic, social and emotional growth of all students requires specific awareness, understanding and skill from all personnel. Attitudes of acceptance, respect and understanding can be shared with others only when they first become part of the way we think, feel and act.

- Inservice training opportunities for all staff will be provided to enhance their sensitivity and competence in working effectively with people of diverse racial, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds

EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

The Board of Education for the City of Hamilton recognizes that all Board employees are models in the educational process. Positive role models for all students enhance their racial, ethnic, cultural and religious identities and self-esteem. It is therefore important for all students to have positive interaction with staff, who represent diverse racial, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds at all levels of employment within the system.

- All members of our multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious community will have equal opportunity for employment. It is the aim of the Board of Education for the City of Hamilton to ensure that individuals will be employed on the basis of their qualifications. As required by the Ontario Human Rights Code, race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, record of offence, marital status, family status and disability will not serve as barriers in the workplace.

acceptance, respect and understanding

inservice opportunities
equal opportunity for employment

*staff reflecting the racial, ethnic, cultural and
religious composition of the community*

Our school system's commitment "Towards Race Relations And Ethnocultural Equity" recognizes the diversity of the community groups we serve. We respect their strengths and encourage groups to join hands with us in developing our policy.

Mary Caye Clark, Chairman, Board of Education for the City of Hamilton

Every employee has a role to play in policy development. I encourage you to participate as planning and/or inservice opportunities are presented.

K. A. Rielly, Director of Education and Secretary, Board of Education for the City of Hamilton

An extremely positive direction that continues to elicit support and commitment from all areas of community, students and staff.

Carl Burnell, President, Hamilton Principals' Association

The Hamilton Secondary School Principal's Council endorses, in principle, "Towards Race Relations And Ethnocultural Equity".

Mary Sager, Chairperson, Hamilton Secondary Schools Principals' Council

The Hamilton Board is to be commended for adopting an ambitious program that sensitizes us to discrimination and promotes equity. Teachers and students will benefit from these initiatives which support tolerance and respect for all individuals and groups within our educational community.

Berverley Mulkewich, President, Hamilton Teachers' Federation

OSSTF endorses the Board's intention to create an equitable and harmonious education system in Hamilton.

Gerry Price, President, Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation

Only through devoted support of the ideals of this policy development can we achieve understanding and claim integrity. A community which tolerates racism, especially insidious, smiling racism, poisons its own social environment.

Sharon Flood, Vice-President, O.P.E.I.U. local 527, CUPE

The Non-union Clerical Association welcomes the Board's initiative in creating a workplace where tolerance and respect are the guiding factors.

Shirley Morley, President, Hamilton Non-union Clerical Association

It is nice to see the Board of Education for the City of Hamilton lead the way to stimulate harmonious relations amongst the different ethnic and cultural groups in this city. Let me extend to you on behalf of the A.E.F.O., unité secondaire Hamilton my congratulations on a well thought out and well prepared document.

Raymond Therrien, Président, Unité secondaire de l'AEFO



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This booklet was developed by the Race Relations Planning Committee with assistance from Information Management Services, The Board of Education for the City of Hamilton. Funding assistance was provided by the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Culture.

**FOR COPIES OF THE REVISED WORKING PAPER,
CONTACT STEVE BARRS, 527-5092, EXT. 437**



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